

23 August 2016

Director Regions, Southern
Dept. of Planning and Environment
PO Box 5475
Wollongong NSW 2520

To whom it may concern:

Re: Submission to the Draft South East and Tablelands Regional Plan in relation to the site located at 433 Hardwick Lane, Yass.

1. Introduction

This submission has been prepared by Mecone Pty Ltd (Mecone) on behalf of Oakstand Pty Ltd, who are acting on behalf of the owner of the site at 433 Hardwick Lane, Yass (Lot 50 DP1086362).

The subject site is located in the Yass Valley Local Government Area (LGA) and is within the South East and Tablelands Region in south eastern NSW. The site is located at 433 Hardwick Lane, Yass. The site is an irregularly shaped lot with a site area of approximately 116.8 hectares, with access to the site via Hardwick Lane on the north western boundary.

The site is set amongst open rural land in close proximity to the Yass Town Centre and approximately 50km to Canberra. The site is largely cleared with one building, scattered trees, numerous small dams and access tracks located on the site. The site is located close to two major highways – the Barton Highway (A25) and the Hume Highway (M31).

The purpose of this submission is to:

- Demonstrate the consistency of our client's proposed development with the strategic directions of the draft South East and Tablelands Regional Plan; and
- Make recommendations, where appropriate, regarding potential changes to the draft 'Directions' and 'Actions' outlined in the Regional Plan where our research has indicated alternate solutions.

This submission is accompanied by a Vision Statement for the site, which has been previously presented to Yass Valley Council. The attached Vision Statement:

- Describes the site in its context;
- Provides an overview of relevant strategic directions;
- Identifies challenges and opportunities for development at the site; and
- Discusses the design concepts for the site.


2. Assessment of proposal for the site against the draft Regional Plan

| Goal 1 - Sustainably manage growth opportunities arising from the ACT | | |
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| Direction | Action | Consistency with Vision for 433 Hardwick Lane Yass |
| Direction 1.1 Provide well-located and serviced land for housing in the Greater Capital to meet demand. | Action 1.1.1 Coordinate infrastructure delivery to support release areas in the Greater Capital | Locating the proposed new housing in between Canberra and Yass Town Centre will allow infrastructure, services and transport to be extended from the existing urban areas and connect the two centres. |
| | Action 1.1.3 Develop a cross-border land monitoring program | <p>The Plan recognises that land and housing within the ACT and the Greater Capital are related, and aims to develop cross-border monitoring of supply and demand.</p> <p>As the site is within driving distance of both Yass and Canberra, the new housing supply will have cross-border influences. The development will contribute to the tracking and forecasting of housing and employment land release that this action endorses.</p> |
| | Action 1.1.4 Support the development of local housing strategies in the Greater Capital | <p>Under this action the draft Plan states '<i>analysis suggests there is sufficient zoned land to meet demand over the next 20 years</i>' However, investigations undertaken for the vision statement revealed that adequate housing supply in Yass LGA is far less certain than this statement suggests. Due to the recent increase in house prices, projected population growth, and amount of building approvals failing to meet dwelling targets in the area, there is need for further land release in Yass to accommodate long term growth.</p> <p>The draft Plan continues with '<i>pressure for new land release, in areas outside those already identified in an existing strategy, will require careful consideration. This is particularly relevant to the efficient use of infrastructure and services and the development of sustainable communities</i>'.</p> <p>The site is currently zoned as R5 Large Lot Residential and E4 Environmental Living; however it serves as a viable location for land release and housing supply. The site is located in close proximity to the Yass Town Centre, it requires minimal infrastructure upgrades and can utilise existing</p> |

Goal 1 - Sustainably manage growth opportunities arising from the ACT

| Direction | Action | Consistency with Vision for 433 Hardwick Lane Yass |
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| | | <p>services and facilities provided by the Yass Town Centre. Access to ACT will also assist in the Government's directions to coordinate cross-border land and housing release.</p> <p>Recommendation: that additional sites, including 433 Hardwick Lane, Yass be considered for rezoning to meet key local and state housing targets and strategic objectives.</p> |
| <p>Direction 1.2</p> <p>Improve cross-border transport connectivity</p> | <p>Action 1.2.1</p> <p>Work with the ACT Government to make travelling to and from Canberra easier and more convenient.</p> | <p>The proposed new housing supply on the site will generate further cross-border movement and connectivity via Barton Highway, which is immediately east of the site and considered in the draft plan to be a main strategic transport route set to undergo upgrades in the <i>Draft Barton Highway Improvement Strategy</i>.</p> <p>New residents will benefit from close proximity to employment, education, health, air travel and other key services available in the ACT. The draft Plan aims to improve cross-border connections through better integration of public transport. The increase of daily commuters on Barton Highway from Yass Valley will create larger demand for public transport services and will drive further investment in the road network to support economic growth.</p> |

Goal 2 – Protect and enhance the region's natural environment

| Direction | Action | Consistency with Vision for 433 Hardwick Lane Yass |
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| <p>Direction 2.1</p> <p>Protect the region's diverse environmental values.</p> | <p>Action 2.1.1</p> <p>Avoid, minimise and offset the impact of development on significant environmental assets.</p> | <p>While a detailed ecological survey is required to determine whether there is any significant flora or fauna on the site, Figure 4 provided in the draft Plan (Figure 1 below) does not recognise the site area as holding high value environmental land or biodiversity corridor linkages.</p>  <p>Figure 1: 'Figure 4: Environmental values'</p> <p>Source: The draft Southeast and tablelands regional plan</p> |
| <p>Direction 2.3</p> <p>Build the region's resilience to natural hazards and climate change</p> | <p>Action 2.3.1</p> <p>Apply contemporary risk management to flooding and other hazards.</p> | <p>Any future redevelopment of the subject site will be able to apply contemporary risk management to flooding and other hazards.</p> |

Goal 2 – Protect and enhance the region's natural environment

| Direction | Action | Consistency with Vision for 433 Hardwick Lane Yass |
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| Direction 2.4 Protect and secure the region's water resources | Action 2.4.1 Finalise water-sharing plans for rivers and groundwater systems in the region. Action 2.4.2 Prepare integrated water cycle management strategies. | <p>Water supply to Yass is provided by the Yass River and Yass Dam, however the capacity of the local water supply infrastructure requires confirmation. A new sewerage treatment plant was commissioned in 2010 and will cater for a future increase of 10,800 residents.</p> <p>In addition to providing future housing, development of the site provides justification of the extension of existing water services from the ACT and provides water security for the Yass Valley LGA.</p> <p>The landowner has previously expressed a willingness to work with government and contribute resources to ensure adequate water supply throughout the region.</p> |

Goal 3 – Strengthen the economic opportunities of the region

| Direction | Action | Consistency with Vision for 433 Hardwick Lane Yass |
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| Direction 3.1 Support and promote the growth of the tourism industry | Action 3.1.1 Improve tourism related transport services | <p>The site will provide housing supply within commuting distance of Yass town centre and Canberra. The draft Plan indicates that this site will be well placed for the future community to benefit from cross-border work opportunities.</p> <p>The outcomes of population increase, including commuter activity and work force size, will encourage investment in upgrades to local infrastructure and transport. The region will become more desirable and accessible for tourism.</p> |

Goal 4 – Build communities that are strong, healthy and well-connected

| Direction | Action | Consistency with Vision for 433 Hardwick Lane Yass |
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| <p>Direction 4.1</p> <p>Provide sufficient housing to suit challenging demands of the region</p> | <p>Action 4.1.1</p> <p>Plan for a range of housing types to cater for changing community needs and household choice.</p> | <p>The indicative layout proposes a range of housing typologies on over 800 lots. The site's redevelopment aims to support typical house and land packages, with a range of larger lots in some areas and a zoning of medium density close in the precinct centre.</p> <p>The region is experiencing an ageing population, with the number of persons aged over 65 is expected to increase by 25% to 34% of the total population over the next 20 years.</p> <p>There will be a demand for accessible housing close to health services. As the site is located between Yass town centre and Canberra, it offers housing which is closer to health services in Canberra, while still being located within Yass Valley and offering the rural lifestyle that mostly attracts ageing residents.</p> |
| | <p>Action 4.1.2</p> <p>Protect agricultural and environmental land by avoiding the impacts of rural residential development</p> | <p>Concerns regarding the environmental impacts associated with rural residential subdivision raised in Action 4.1.2 are relatively subsided when applied to the specific site.</p> <p>The site's redevelopment will not create inappropriate environmental impacts to agricultural or environmental land. Redevelopment of the site will not create social isolation as it has access to existing urban areas and will not create conflicts with farming land.</p> |
| <p>Direction 4.5</p> <p>Enhance community access to jobs, goods and services by improving connections</p> | <p>Action 4.5.1</p> <p>Develop a sustainable model for community transport service provision</p> | <p>The site has good transport connections via Hume Highway (M31) and Barton Highway (A25) linking Sydney and Melbourne.</p> |
| | <p>Action 4.5.3</p> <p>Deliver improved transport connectivity for urban centres and towns.</p> | <p>Land release for housing supply on site, combined with future upgrades proposed for Barton Highway (A25), will influence the potential for integrating improved community transport services between Yass Valley and Canberra.</p> |

3. Vision for the subject site

The site is envisioned as a natural extension of the Moss Vale urban area. The subject site has excellent potential to develop for residential purposes and to assist both the NSW and ACT Governments in achieving housing targets:

- Yass Valley plays an important complementary role in accommodating future growth in southeastern NSW. The site is strategically located and capable of meeting demands for rural lifestyle close to transport, infrastructure and services;
- Crucially, the site is contiguous to urban land, allowing new development to utilise existing infrastructure;
- The land is in single ownership, allowing the site to be developed in through a master-planned approach;
- The site does not impose on any state significant or locally recognized environmental land;
- Development of the site provides an opportunity to improve the existing environment and implement initiatives to improve sustainability;

Please refer to the Vision Statement attached to this letter for further discussion of the development potential of the site.

4. Conclusion

Mecone is fully supportive of the draft Plan and we look forward to the eventual publication of the Strategy. As outlined in this submission, we believe that the site has future development potential to provide quality sustainable housing supply, and to support the Government in achieving the desired vision for the region over the next 30 years.

Importantly, the submission and Vision Statement demonstrates that future redevelopment of the site is generally consistent with the key Directions and Actions outlined in the draft Strategy. We have made recommendations with respect to Action 1.1.4 (Support the development of local housing strategies in the Greater Capital) to consider additional housing in appropriate locations including 433 Hardwick Lane, Yass.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission. Please contact me at on 02 8667 8668 or kbartlett@mecone.com.au if you wish to discuss this submission in more detail.

Yours sincerely,



Kate Bartlett